

## What is electronic submission?

Research grant applications for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will have to be submitted electronically through Grants.gov using the SF424 Research & Related (R&R). December 1, 2005 will mark the beginning of a momentous change in the way NIH has traditionally received grant applications. One by one, all competing research grant programs (mechanisms) will transition from paper submission of the PHS 398 to electronic submission using the SF424 (R&R).

## What are the benefits?

- Standardized application format will help focus on scientific priorities.
- Efficiencies will be gained by automating the validation of business rules.
- A clearer grant image that is in color will be available.
- There is potential to shorten the time period from application submission to award.
- NIH and grantees will save an estimated 200,000,000 pieces of paper per year and countless hours of human effort.
- Scanning, printing, and data entry costs will be reduced, saving taxpayers' money.

## What is the timeframe for requiring electronic submission?

- **December 1, 2005** - Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) grant applications will be the first to transition to electronic submission via Grants.gov.
- **December 2005-May 2007** - The transition schedule for other research grant programs is posted at <http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt>.
- Applications for the transition submission date and thereafter must utilize the SF424 (R&R) form and be submitted electronically through Grants.gov - paper will not be accepted.

## Where do I go for help?

### Electronic Submission Website

For up-to-date information on electronic submission and the SF424 (R&R):

<http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt>

### Grants Info

For NIH funding opportunities, application guidelines, and grant-related resources:

Phone: 301-435-0714

TTY: 301-451-5936

Fax: 301-480-0525

Phone support Monday- Friday

hours: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. ET

Email: [GrantsInfo@nih.gov](mailto:GrantsInfo@nih.gov)

### Grants.gov

For information about Grants.gov registration, PureEdge™ software and form navigation:

Online: <http://grants.gov>

Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726

Fax: 301-480-0525

Phone support Monday-Friday

hours: 7 a.m.-9 p.m. ET

Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

### eRA Commons

For information about eRA Commons registration, application validation, and post-submission functionality:

eRA Commons Online:

<https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/index.jsp>

eRA Online: <http://era.nih.gov>

Phone: 301-402-7469

Toll Free: 1-866-504-9552

TTY: 301-451-5939

Phone support Monday-Friday

hours: 7 a.m.-8 p.m. ET

Email: [commons@od.nih.gov](mailto:commons@od.nih.gov)

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# Electronic Submission of NIH Research Grant Applications

<http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt>



### What is Grants.gov?

- Grants.gov allows organizations to electronically **Find** and **Apply** for competitive grant opportunities from all federal grant-making agencies.
- Grants.gov provides a single access point (portal) for more than 1,000 grant programs offered by the 26 federal grant-making agencies.
- Any person, business, or state, local, or tribal government can use Grants.gov to electronically search for grant opportunities and apply for grants.

### What is the eRA Commons?

- The Electronic Research Administration (eRA) Commons is a meeting place on the Web where research organizations and grantees can receive and transmit information about the administration of biomedical and behavioral research grants.
- The eRA Commons interacts with Grants.gov to retrieve electronic applications for NIH grants submitted through the Grants.gov portal.
- Signing Officials (SO) and Principal Investigators (PI) use the eRA Commons to review identified errors and verify applications, which completes the electronic submission process.
- **Applicants** can access the status of their applications.
- **Grantees** can access the status of their awards, submit reports and make requests electronically.

***“Now applicants will begin to enjoy the benefits of a single federal interface for finding opportunities and submitting applications online using a single form and process.”***

—Dr. Norka Ruiz Bravo, NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research

### How do institutions and applicants prepare for electronic submission?

#### Registration

Start the registration process at least four weeks before applications are due.

- Institutions need to register on Grants.gov. You can find instructions at <http://grants.gov/GetStarted>
- Institutions and PIs need to register in the eRA Commons system. You can find instructions at <https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons>

#### Determine the mode of submission

Applicant organizations can submit applications to NIH through Grants.gov in one of two ways:

- **Forms-based Submission**  
Organizations using forms-based submission will rely on the PureEdge™ forms viewer provided free of charge from Grants.gov to download, complete and submit application packages.
- **System-to-System Transfer of Data**  
Organizations desiring a systems-to-systems approach can work with Grants.gov to develop a data exchange system (that transmits XML data streams) or partner with an established commercial Service Provider that has already developed such an interface with Grants.gov.

#### To learn more, visit

<http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt>

### What are the steps for electronic submission?\*

1. Search for and identify a grant opportunity on Grants.gov.
2. Download the grant application package.
3. Complete the application. Be sure to save a local copy.
4. The organization submits the application through Grants.gov either directly or through a Service Provider.
5. Track the status of your submitted application package at Grants.gov until you are notified via email by Grants.gov that NIH has received it.
6. eRA software checks the application against NIH's business rules.
7. NIH notifies both the PI (Principal Investigator) and SO (Signing Official) by email to check the eRA Commons for results of the NIH validations check. Because email can be unreliable, PIs and SOs should periodically check eRA Commons for the status of their application.
8. The PI and SO find out if the grant application passed or failed the rule check, and:
  - if it passed, review the application. If the application is accurate, the PI and SO must independently verify it in the eRA Commons. If not, they reject the application in the eRA Commons, make the necessary changes, and submit the entire corrected application via Grants.gov
  - if it failed, a list of the errors and warnings appears in eRA Commons. Fix the errors and submit the entire corrected application through Grants.gov.
9. After verification, the eRA Commons saves the data and grant image, and NIH begins processing the application.
10. Applicants can track the progress of their application on the eRA Commons.

\* For submission instruction updates visit <http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt>